

The Molly Tango Foundation Sends Keyla To the Mayo Clinic
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In July 2002., 10 year old Keyla Figueroa developed flu like symptoms that wouldn't subside. Four days later she woke unable to move her extremities and was rushed to the ER. Two days after that she was intubated for respiratory distress and would later require a tracheotomy for the remaining 3 weeks of her 2 month hospital stay. At this point Keyla and her family were told she had Guillain-Barre Syndrome, a disorder in which the body's immune system attacks part of the peripheral nervous system. There are few treatments available and no known reason why it affects some people and not others. Immediately Keyla was treated with high doses of immunoglobulin. Doctors give intravenous injections of the proteins that in small quantities, the immune system uses naturally to attack invading organism. Investigators have found that giving high doses of these immunoglobulins, derived from a pool of thousands of normal donors, to Guillain-Barré patients can lessen the immune attack on the nervous system. Keyla improved slowly but still had profound quadriparesis.

Over the next 3 years Keyla and her family were in and out of hospitals and rehabilitation centers. [As a result of her condition, she needed spinal surgery in 2004 to correct severe scoliosis which was causing breathing impairments. She had multiple respiratory difficulties, a tracheotomy and ventilator dependency. In 2005 she required surgery for a dislocated hip, also as a result of her condition. Keyla is currently wheelchair dependent and cannot walk.](#)

She continued the immunoglobulin therapy until May 2006 when she started steroid therapy.

During this stressful time Keyla's parents found support and information from the GBS/CIDP Foundation. Upon the recommendation of another parent they were referred to The Mayo clinic for further evaluation and testing to determine what therapy would help Keyla reach her goal to walk again. This would prove to be a costly trip for the family including Keyla's twin sister. A social worker from Norwalk Hospital familiar with the Figueroa's and The Molly Ann Tango Memorial Foundation contacted the foundation for traveling expenses. This foundation is dedicated to helping families raising children with special needs. Their wish was granted and

Keyla and her family traveled to The Mayo Clinic this past September for a week of testing and evaluations and more importantly treatment recommendations.

Since their visit Keyla has once again started IVIG (intravenous Immunoglobulin) twice weekly. They have seen a marked improvement in Keyla's mobility. She can now stand for short periods and take small steps with a walker. She continues physical and occupational therapy and has started back to school for the first time in 4 years. As a 14 year old freshman she has received high honors. Her extremely supportive family and Keyla will return to the Mayo Clinic this spring to assess her current treatment and for the Figuro's this time they will be glad to report Keyla's successes. There are still more obstacles to overcome but they are confident that Keyla will walk again and the Molly Ann Tango Foundation is committed to helping her get there.

For more information about the Molly Ann Tango Memorial Foundation please call 431-4180, PO Box 15, Ridgefield, CT.